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Message Text

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21
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---------- 088458
R 190440Z SEP 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USDEL MTN GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJECT: AUTOMOBILE CERTIFICATION ISSUE

1. ON SEPTEMBER 10, SECOND NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION DIRECTOR SAITO, MOFA, MET WITH AMBASSADOR DENT AT STR ON THE AUTOMOBILE CERTIFICATION ISSUE. SAITO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ECONMIN FUKADA OF THE JAPANESE EMBASSY. SAITO EXPRESSED HIS REGRETS THAT THE POSITIVE TONE OF HIS JULY 28 MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR YEUTTER IN TOKYO HAD APPARENTLY DETERIORATED. SAITO SUGGESTED THAT MUCH OF THE CURRENT IMPASSE RESULTED FROM MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON BOTH SIDES AND THAT HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD TO IMPROVE THIS SITUATION
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IN TOKYO.

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2. AMBASSADOR DENT STRESSED THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF PROCEDURAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WERE TO JEOPARDIZE THE HUGE U.S.-JAPAN AUTOMOBILE TRADE. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE BALANCE OF THIS TRADE IS OVER-WHELMINGLY FAVORABLE TO JAPAN.

3. ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WHICH WERE DISCUSSED IN GREATER DETAIL IN A FOLLOW-UP MEETING WITH KELLY OF STR, SAITO REPORTED GOJ AGREEMENT TO WORK WITHIN THE FORTY-FIVE DAY "GUIDELINE" IN EITHER GRANTING CLEARANCE OF U.S.

VEHICLES OR PROVIDING THE MANUFACTURERS WITH THE REASONS FOR REFUSING CLEARANCE. WHEN PRESSED FURTHER ON THIS ISSUE, SAITO THOUGHT IT REASONABLE THAT IF CLEARANCE WERE REFUSED, THE GOJ WOULD PROVIDE AN ALL INCLUSIVE AND DEFINITIVE LISTING OF DEFICIENCIES WHICH WHEN CORRECTED WOULD LEAD QUICKLY TO GOJ CLEARANCE. THIS WOULD PRECLUDE A SUCCESSION OF FORTY-FIVE DAY PERIODS PUNCTUATED WITH DIFFERENT LISTS OF DEFICIENCIES. STR RESPONDED THAT IF SUCH A FORTY-FIVE DAY "GUIDELINE" WERE IN FACT IMPLEMENTED, THIS SHOULD SATISFY THE U.S. INDUSTRY OVER THE SHORT TERM, I.E. WITH RESPECT TO THE 1977 MODEL CLEARANCE PROCEDURE. NOTWITHSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IMMEDIATE IMPLE-MENTATION OF THE FORTY-FIVE DAY "GUIDELINE", THE U.S. INDUSTRY WOULD STILL WANT SUBSEQUENT PROGRESS, I.E. TO IMPACT THE 1978 CERTIFICATION PROCESS, ON THE OTHER "TECHNICAL" AREAS OF CONCERN.

4. ON THE DATE OF MANUFACTURE ISSUE, SAITO THOUGHT AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED IF THE USG WERE TO CONFIRM THAT THE METAL PLATES ATTACHED TO U.S. VEHICLES INDI-CATING DATE OF MANUFACTURE WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH USG SPECIFICATIONS AND WERE ACCEPTED BY THE USG AS EVIDENCE OF DATE OF MANUFACTURE. (DOT IS FURTHER ANALYZING THIS POSSIBILITY).

5. SAITO SAID HE WAS DISTURBED WITH A REPORT HE RE-CEIVED FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY IN TOKYO CONCERNING FORD MOTOR COMPANY'S CLAIM THAT MOT'S MITAKA LAB HAD REFUSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO ACCEPT A REPRESENTATIVE VEHICLE SUBMITTED BY FORD. SAITO REPORTED THAT ACCORDING TO THE MOT FORD HAD NOT SUBMITTED SUCH A VEHICLE. (WE HAVE ASKED MVMA FOR CLARIFICATION OF THIS DISCREPANCY). REFERRING TO HIS STATEMENT MADE AT THE JULY 28 CONSULTATIONS IN TOKYO CONCERNING THE GOJ POSITION ON ACCEPTING REPRESENTATIVE VEHICLES FOR TESTING SAITO RECONFIRMED THE ACCEPTABILITY OF SUCH VEHICLES IN PRINCIPLE BUT SAID THAT SPECIFIC CASES

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HAD TO BE CONSIDERED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. ROBINSON

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